Guide to the Papers of Edward Grant Barrow, 1917-1953

National Baseball Hall of Fame Library

National Baseball Hall of Fame
25 Main Street
Cooperstown, NY 13326

This guide to the collection was prepared by Kate Putirskis and reviewed by Anne McFarland and Russell Wolinsky in June, 2006.
Collection Number
BA MSS 35
BL-185.2002

Title
Papers of Edward Grant “Ed” Barrow

Inclusive Dates
1917-1953

Extent
1.5 linear feet (3 manuscript boxes)

Repository
National Baseball Hall of Fame Library
25 Main Street
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Abstract
This collection contains the papers of Edward Grant “Ed” Barrow, who held numerous positions in professional baseball in the first two decades of the 20th century before entering the front office for the New York Yankees in 1921. Barrow remained there until 1945, assuming the position of president in 1938, and was largely responsible for assembling the Yankees dynasties of the 1920s-1940s. This collection contains a variety of Barrow’s personal papers from his time as Yankees president and continue on to the time of his death in 1953. These papers consist of correspondence, legal documents, telegrams, clippings, photos, and other ephemera.

Acquisition Information
This collection was a gift of Alfred Angelo in 2002.

Preferred Citation
Papers of Edward Grant Barrow, 1917-1953, BA MSS 35, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, NY.

Access
By appointment during regular business hours, email research@baseballhall.org.

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History
Edward Grant “Ed” Barrow was born on 10 May, 1868, on a hemp plantation near Springfield, Illinois. His father was a Civil War veteran, and not long after Ed’s birth, the
family moved west to take advantage of free land the United States government was offering to veterans. The family settled near Des Moines, Iowa, where Barrow grew up.

In 1887, Barrow took a job as a mailing clerk for the Des Moines News, and went to the Leader the next year, where he was promoted to copy manager. Barrow was already a fan of baseball at this time, and had played regularly as a child, but had hurt his arm in an accident and was no longer able to play well. He instead turned to what would be a life-long calling when he organized and managed the boys working under him at the newspaper into a baseball team.

Barrow moved briefly to Chicago with a brother in 1888 before relocating in 1889 to Pittsburgh, where he worked in the hotel business until 1893. While in Pittsburgh, Barrow met Harry Stevens, and in 1894 the two helped to launch the International League while also backing a Wheeling, West Virginia team, which Barrow managed. Despite the success of the Wheeling team, who were leading the league in mid-season, the International League disbanded before the end of 1894 season. Following this, Barrow moved to New Jersey, where he helped to organize the Atlantic League in 1895 and acquired the Paterson, New Jersey team in the league. Barrow wasted no time in making his first great baseball acquisition, when he returned to the Pittsburgh area to sign Honus Wagner to a contract with the New Jersey team.

In 1896, Barrow was elected president of the Atlantic League, and in 1898 he married Alice Calhoun of Keokuk, Iowa. In 1900, Barrow bought a quarter interest in a Toronto club, and managed them for the next three years. Barrow became manager of the Detroit Tigers in late 1903, and retained that position throughout the 1904 season. In 1905 he moved to Indianapolis to manage a team in the American Association, and in 1906 went back to Toronto to again manage a team there. He was successful in Toronto, leading his team to a championship in 1907.

Following the conclusion of the 1907 season, Barrow temporarily left baseball to open a hotel in Toronto, where he stayed until 1910. His first wife died in 1910, and when a position was offered to Barrow in December of 1910 to move east and run the Eastern League, Barrow gladly left the hotel business behind. Barrow remained in the role of president of the International League (as he had changed the name immediately upon taking over in 1910) through mid-1917, while living in Manhattan. Meanwhile, Barrow married his second wife, Fannie Winifred Taylor of Toronto, in 1912. The couple had one daughter, Barrow’s only child.

Barrow became manager of the Boston Red Sox at the end of the 1917 season, where one of his first actions was to sign Babe Ruth to a contract. Barrow was successful with the Red Sox and led them to a World Series victory in 1918, while also masterminding the plan to convert Ruth from a pitcher to an outfielder. After financial troubles caused the sale of most of the Red Sox talent to the New York Yankees, Barrow followed, accepting a position as business manager of the Yankees in 1920. Barrow would remain in this role until 1938, after which he moved up to take over the position of president of the Yankees.
– a position vacated by the death of co-owner Jacob Ruppert. Barrow retained this position until 1945, at which time he retired from baseball at the age of 77.

Barrow’s legacy while in the front office for the New York Yankees is unparalleled. In 24 years he built teams capable of maintaining a dynasty, orchestrating 14 pennants and 10 World Series victories. Barrow was responsible for signing a number of prominent players to the Yankees, among them Lou Gehrig and Joe DiMaggio. Barrow was also responsible for developing the first farm system for the Yankees, as well as being the first to put numbers on the backs of players’ uniforms, and was the first to allow fans to keep foul balls hit into the stands.

Throughout his lengthy career with the Yankees, Barrow remained ardently opposed to “night baseball,” and refused to allow lights to be installed in Yankee Stadium, although he had been among the first to introduce the idea of night baseball by lighting up a 4th of July game in 1896 while president of the Atlantic League. Barrow remained convinced that lights would ruin baseball as an enterprise, and feared fans would not come out to attend games in the evening. He attended his first night game in 1947, and was amazed to see Yankee Stadium was sold out for the game. From then on, he reversed his campaign against evening games, citing that it was clearly what the fans wanted to see.

Barrow, known to many as simply the “Yankee Empire Builder,” died in 1953 at his home in Port Chester, New York, following battles with several illnesses. He was named to the Hall of Fame later that year by the newly formed Committee on Veterans.

**Scope and Content**
This collection contains the personal papers of Ed Barrow between 1917 and 1953. The majority of these papers deal with Barrow’s personal life outside of baseball, but a small number of them are in reference to his work in the Yankees’ front office. This collection contains a variety of items, including: autograph requests, ticket requests, invitations to attend baseball-related events, income tax documents, mortgage paperwork, insurance paperwork, records of charity work, newspaper clippings, personal correspondence, photographs, and other ephemera.

**System of Arrangement**
Series I contains personal papers relating to Barrow's job in baseball.
Series II contains personal papers dealing with Barrow’s personal life outside of baseball.

**Controlled Access Terms**
These records are indexed under the following terms in the National Baseball Hall of Fame’s Library catalog. Researchers wishing to find related materials may wish to search under these terms.

**Corporate Names**
- International League of Professional Baseball Clubs
- New York Yankees (Baseball Team)
Personal Names
Barrow, Edward Grant, 1868-1953
Ruppert, Jacob, 1867-1939

Forms
Clippings
Correspondence
Photographs

Content List

Series 1 – Baseball, 1917-1952
Series 1 contains all of the papers related to Barrow’s career in baseball. Included in this series are autograph requests, requests for tickets, invitations to attend baseball-related events, correspondence on a variety of topics, and other assorted items.

Box 1
Folder 1 International League Audit, 1917
Folder 2 Baseball-Related Business, 1923-1949
Folder 3 Jack Walsh Issue, 1930
Folder 4 Publications, 1942-1950
Folder 5 Passes and Tickets, 1942
Folder 6 Passes and Tickets, 1943
Folder 7 Passes and Tickets, 1945-1952 and no date
Folder 8 James L. White Hall of Fame Induction Campaign, 1952
Folder 9 Old-Timer Baseball Interview, 1939
Folder 10 Autograph Requests, 1942-1952 and no date
Folder 11 Responses to Colliers’ Article, 1950
Folder 12 Correspondence, WWII Servicemen, 1942-1943 and no date
Folder 13 Correspondence, Invitations and Appearances, 1942-1952
Folder 14 Correspondence, Baseball, 1942-1950
Folder 15 Correspondence, Personal, 1919-1949

Series 2 – Personal Business, 1920-1953
Series 2 contains all of Barrow’s official and legal papers that have no relation to his baseball career. Included are items such as income tax paperwork, an estate, a will, insurance documents, mortgage payment paperwork, charity work records, plans made for recreation, correspondence over real estate Barrow is interested in buying, newspaper clippings, photos, assorted ephemera, and a variety of personal correspondence.

Box 2
Folder 1 Income Taxes, 1924, 1925, 1927, 1928
Folder 2 Income Taxes, 1931, 1936, 1938, 1939
Folder 3 Income Taxes, 1940-1943
Folder 5  Income Taxes, 1950-1952
Folder 6  Estate of Jacob Ruppert, 1941-1942
Folder 7  Will, 1942-1952
Folder 8  Automobile Registration and Insurance, 1942-1949
Folder 9  Legal Matters, 1935-1953
Folder 10  Insurance Information, 1933-1953
Folder 11  Loans, 1933-1952
Folder 12  Pelhamdale & Mt. Tom Road Manor, 1920-1925 and no date
Folder 13  Maintenance, Larchmont House, 1942-1948
Folder 14  Maintenance, Rye House, 1945-1953
Folder 15  Mortgage, Larchmont House, 1923-1945
Folder 16  Mortgage, Rye House, 1945-1950
Folder 17  Mausoleum, 1951-1952

Box 3
Folder 1  Charity Work, 1942-1953
Folder 2  Iowa Monument Company, 1941-1942
Folder 3  Recreation, 1928-1948
Folder 4  Real Estate, Seeking, 1942-1943
Folder 5  Clippings, 1940-1953 and no date
Folder 6  Correspondence, Public Officials, 1942-1949
Folder 7  Personal Correspondence, April 1939-May 1942
Folder 8  Personal Correspondence, June-December, 1942
Folder 9  Personal Correspondence, 1943
Folder 10  Personal Correspondence, 1948
Folder 11  Personal Correspondence, 1949
Folder 12  Personal Correspondence, 1950-1952
Folder 13  Personal Correspondence, no date
Folder 14  Addresses, no date
Folder 15  Personal Ephemera, 1942-1952 and no date